

Message Text

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13

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 NEA-14 ISO-00 EB-11 COME-00 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 DRC-01 /056 W
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R 241750Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1989

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

USINT ALGIERS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BPRO MO

SUBJ: GENERAL MOTORS MISSION TO MOROCCO

REF: STATE 78348

1. GM MISSION DEPARTED RABAT AFTERNOON MAY 24 FOLLOWING ONE AND A HALF DAYS OF MEETINGS WITH GOM OFFICIALS. AFTER BRIEFING BY AMBASSADOR AND EMBASSY/USAID, GROUP SAW MINISTERS OF FINANCE, COMMERCE/INDUSTRY AND COOPERATION (LATTER AT DR. BENHIMA'S OWN INITIATIVE), PLUS TOP OFFICERS OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT BANK (BNDE), OFFICE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT (ODI), PRIME MINISTER'S ECONOMIC STAFF, AND PLAN. IT ACCOMPANIED ON MOST CALLS BY PROMINENT MOROCCAN BUSINESSMAN OTHMAN BENJELLOUN. BENJELLOUN, WHO SET UP MOST OF MISSION'S PROGRAM IN CASABLANCA, OBVIOUSLY WORKING TO GET A PIECE OF WHATEVER ACTIVITY GM MIGHT DECIDE ESTABLISH HERE.

2. MISSION LEADERS RAAFAT RAHMAN AND GRAYSON LANE TOLD EMBOFFS DURING VISIT THAT THEY JUDGE MOROCCO LIKELY PROSPECT FOR POSSIBLE GM INVESTMENT, PROBABLY IN MANUFACTURE AUTOMOBILE AND/OR TRUCK COMPONENTS OFR COMPANY'S EUROPEAN OPERATIONS. THEY SAID MISSION IMPRESSED BY MOROCCO'S FAVORABLE GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION, LABOR RESOURCES, AND CURRENT RECEPTIVITY TOWARDS NEW FOREIGN INVESTMENT.

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MAJOR PROBLEM, HOWEVER, WILL BE COUNTRY'S LACK OF INDUSTRIAL RAW

MATERIALS; ALL STEEL, RUBBER, OR OTHER COMPONENTS WOULD HAVE TO BE SHIPPED IN, AT COST WHICH MIGHT CANCEL ADVANTAGE LOW MOROCCAN LABOR BILL, PARTICULARLY IN ABSENCE ANY SIGNIFICENT LOCAL MARKET. THESE CONSIDERATIONS WILL HAVE TO BE STUDIED FURTHER, PROBABLY BY SMALLER FOLLOW-UP MISSION IN NEXT FEW MONTHS.

3. RAHMAN AND LANE ALSO COMMENTED THAT THEIR NORTH AFRICAN TOUR (UAR AND ALGERIA BEFORE MOROCCO) HAS DISCOURAGED GROUP ABOUT POSSIBILITIES COMPLEMENTATION OF VEHICLE PARTS PRODUCTION BETWEEN ARAB COUNTRIES.
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